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Webster, John  
1846. Speech on the tariff;  
delivered in the House of  
Representatives, U. S.



SPEECH

OF

MR. JOHN STROHM, OF PENN'A,

ON

THE TARIFF.

DELIVERED IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, U. S., JUNE 25, 1846.



WASHINGTON:

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## SPEECH.

The bill reported by the Committee of Ways and Means, proposing to reduce the duties on imports, being under consideration in Committee of the Whole—

MR. STROHM, of Pennsylvania, obtained the floor, and said :

MR. CHAIRMAN: If I could have had the selection of my own time to address this committee I should not have chosen, at this moment, to occupy your attention, inasmuch as the gentleman, (Mr. EWING,) who has just taken his seat, is a colleague of mine; another colleague (Mr. BRODHEAD) having also addressed the committee to-day, it might seem as though we from Pennsylvania were disposed to engross too much of the time of the committee. But as it is a subject of paramount interest to our constituents, and as there is frequently some difficulty in obtaining the floor, I trust I shall be pardoned for embracing the opportunity that is now afforded me, although it may seem to be a little out of place.

Sir, the deep and absorbing interest which my immediate constituents, as well as the whole people of the State of Pennsylvania, feel in the important subject that engages the attention of the committee, must be my apology for obtruding any sentiments which I may entertain in reference to it at this time.

In venturing to do so, it is not my intention to enter into the prolixity of the details of this bill; to dwell upon its bearing and effect, upon each particular interest therein enumerated; that has been so often done by those who are much better qualified for the task than I am, that all those who have had any desire to understand it, or have paid any attention to the arguments that have been adduced from time to time by the friends of the protective system, cannot fail to be fully informed in regard to it. Yet it may be, that before I conclude, I may advert to one or two items in this bill, for the purpose of calling the attention of the committee more particularly to them. My principal object is to take a general view of the protective system, as a whole, as applicable to the people of the United States, its operation and utility in different sections of the country, and the beneficial influence it exercises upon the interests of the whole community.

I am aware, Mr. Chairman, that men, when acting in a representative capacity, however wise, and learned, and patriotic they may be, are still but men—liable to be governed and controlled by the same influences, and actuated by the same motives, that individuals are; liable to be influenced by their passions, by their feelings, by their interests, and not unfrequently, I fear, by their prejudices, rather than by the maxims of sound wisdom and true philosophy—sustained as those may be by the salutary lessons of practical experience. And if, in the few remarks which it is my intention to submit to this committee, I shall fail to convince those who will deign to lend me their attention for a few minutes, that the protective system is mutually beneficial to all and every part of the country, it must be attri-



buted to the strength and inveteracy of their prejudices, or of my inability to do justice to the subject, rather than to any want of intrinsic merit in the subject itself.

Sir, the question now under consideration relates to the levying of duties upon foreign imports, connected with the means of raising revenue and giving protection to American industry. In a country so widely extended as that which it is our good fortune to inhabit, embracing so great a diversity of climate, and such an almost infinite variety of soil, and other natural advantages, it can hardly be expected that any system of public policy, calculated to operate upon the interests of the whole country, however wisely it may be designed, or carefully and judiciously arranged, can be made subservient to the special interests of the people of each locality so as to develop all their resources, and foster and cherish each individual interest, incident to their location. But, as in the first formation of civilized society, individuals had to yield a portion of that unrestrained liberty which they had previously enjoyed, for the purpose of establishing security and protection to their persons and their property; so in establishing and protecting the varied and diversified interests of this great community of nations (if I may be permitted to use the expression,) each must be content to suffer some little abridgement of privileges heretofore enjoyed, to endure some slight inconvenience, to make some sacrifice for the purpose of procuring a greater and more universal good.

Since the first organization of this Government, the moneys necessary to defray the ordinary expenditure thereof have been derived principally from the duties on imports; so firmly has this become established as the settled policy of the country, that none would now think of abandoning it. But whilst the constitutional power as well as the expediency of raising revenue by imposing duties on foreign importations is admitted, an attempt is now made to withdraw the fostering care of government from the protection of our infant manufactures, by refusing to make any discrimination in favor of those interests in the imposition of duties on foreign imports.

A system of horizontal duties, imposing an equal amount upon all articles in proportion to their value, was for a time advocated and insisted on as the only constitutional mode of raising revenue. That seems however to be nearly abandoned; and we hear but little said about it now. Detrimental as such a course of policy must have been to many branches of our domestic industry, it was sustained by an appearance of sincerity, that commanded some respect, even from those who understood the fallacy of the argument, and foresaw the destructiveness of its tendency; but it was reserved for the present Administration to propose and advocate a tariff of duties, in which the principles of discrimination is not only fully recognised, but freely exercised; not however, as has heretofore uniformly been the case where discrimination was exercised at all, for the purpose of affording protection to American industry, to ameliorate the condition of the American laborer, to give a stimulus and an impulse to the ingenuity and enterprise of our own citizens; but with a studied effort, and a perseverance worthy of a better cause, discrimination in almost every instance in the bill now under consideration is calculated to operate against the interests of our own countrymen, and has a tendency to depress the American laborer, and reduce him to a level with the tax-ground victims of European monarchs.



and tyranny, who are compelled to labor incessantly for the purpose of procuring a bare sufficiency of coarse food to sustain their almost famishing families.

The denial of the constitutional right to make discrimination in favor of the American manufacturers, in levying duties upon foreign imports, might be tolerated as the unmitigated error of a perverted judgment, as a policy calculated to favor the interests of some sections of the country, as a policy that has always been contended for by one class of our politicians; but to exercise the power of discrimination for the purpose of oppression, to produce embarrassment and distress amongst those whose lot it is to "earn their bread in the sweat of their brow;" for Government to use the power which a confiding people have entrusted into its hands, for the purpose of injuring those whom it is in duty bound to protect, is approaching a depth of—(I had almost said infamy, Mr. Chairman, but I shall refrain from using a term that might be considered harsh;) but such an exercise of the powers of government, to say the least of it, is approaching a depth of ingratitude that no generous mind would be willing to encounter, and which the present Administration will have the honor of being the first to fathom, if it persists in the measures that have been recommended.

I have said, sir, that in the adjustment of any system of duties on imports, whether upon the principle of protection to our domestic manufactures, for revenue only, or for destruction to the interests of the country, as in the present bill, inequalities will always be experienced, and sacrifices must be made; and the bill now on your table is by no means free from those objections. It becomes our duty, then, to ascertain which of those systems makes the nearest approach to perfection, and is productive of the least inconvenience to those whose interests are to be thereby affected; or, in other words, which will produce "the greatest good to the greatest number." That I believe is the fashionable and democratic mode of expressing the sentiment.

Let us first examine the probable effects of this bill, in case it should be passed into a law, which I trust it never will. But, for sake of the argument, let us suppose it possible that such a bill could receive the sanction of a majority of this House, and a majority in the other branch of the Legislature, for then, I take it, there would be no doubt but it would receive the signature of the Executive; there is no hope of its progress being arrested there. Suppose then it should become a law, what would be its effect? Sir, first, in the train of evils which inevitably would follow, we should have the prostration of our domestic manufactures—thousands of those who are engaged in that branch of business would be thrown out of employ—want of employment on the part of the husband, would soon lead to a want of comfort in the family; and, finally, not only the comforts and conveniences, but the necessities of life would be found to be lacking. Sad experience would then teach the poor laborer that although, under this much lauded free-trade system, he would be exempt from the payment, on some articles, of from an hundred to an hundred and fifty or two hundred per cent. duty, according to the theory of Sir Robert Walker, the prices on the aggregate would be little, if any, diminished; whilst the difficulty of obtaining the wherewithal to purchase would be increased in a fourfold ratio; and his condition, altogether, would be much worse than it was before.

In the next place, we should have the loss of millions of capital now invested in manufactures. That description of property would be greatly depreciated, much of it rendered entirely useless, and many public spirited, industrious, and enterprising men, who have invested their all, even their credit, in the establishment of those highly useful improvements, and though somewhat involved, are now in a fair way to pay their debts and make some provision for educating and maintaining their families, would be reduced to bankruptcy, their business ruined, and their prospects blighted forever. Well, sir, how fares the agriculturist—the farmer—under this new order of things? About to introduce a system so injurious to the other great classes of the community—the manufacturer, the mechanic, and the laborer—perhaps it will commend itself by the superior advantages which it extends to this numerous and respectable class of the community—the agriculturists. This, indeed, is the main argument on which the friends of this bill seem to rely. They tell you that the tariff of '42 gives to the manufacturer more protection than he is entitled to, while it operates to the disadvantage of the farmer, and they wish to repeal it for the purpose of equalizing the burdens. And in undertaking to investigate this part of the subject, we are met upon the threshold by the exulting cry of a repeal of the corn laws! A free market for our surplus produce! And this, sir, is reiterated with such a triumphant air, that we are almost compelled to believe that there is really something in it. A moment's reflection, however, reminds us, that the British market, if opened at all, will be open to all the world as well as to us; and, as a portion of the finest wheat growing countries on the globe is more convenient to England than we are, the American farmer will find, that by the time he gets his wheat or his flour to England, the inhabitant of the coasts of the Black sea and the Baltic will have been there before him; the merchants of Dantzic, Odessa, and Hamburg, will have anticipated him; and, under the superior advantages of cheapness of labor and convenience to market, will have supplied the demand before he arrives, at prices too that he could not afford to sell for; and he will then discover that, as my friend from Vermont (Mr. COLLAMER) stated yesterday, "there is something else than the duty that regulates the price of a commodity"—it is the demand for the article that governs the price; and when the demand is supplied, he will find no sale for his produce, duty or no duty. But I will not expatiate on this part of the subject; this has been fully explained by some of those who have preceded me.

But, Mr. Chairman, suppose we admit that the price of grain will be somewhat enhanced, the benefit thus accruing to the farmer will, in the eyes of the impartial legislator, be more than overbalanced by the imposition of greater burdens upon the laborer; having first cut off his employment, you next increase his expenses by raising the price of his bread. But I contend that the farmer is not benefitted by such a condition of things. And why? Because, by destroying the manufacturer, you deprive the farmer of his best, indeed his only market, for much of the production of his farm. The American farmer does not live by wheat and corn only. He wants a market for his barley, his oats, his hay, his wool, his poultry, his potatoes, his fruit, his vegetables, his butter, his wood, bark, hides, and an hundred other things that might be enumerated, if time would permit, and for which,



unless he finds a market in his own immediate vicinity—a home market—he can realize little or nothing at all. Nay, more; in the employment he finds for his team, in the neighborhood of a furnace, a forge, or a factory, at times when he has but little for his cattle to do at home, he is frequently enabled to earn more money in one week than all the duty he pays, under your high protective tariff, will amount to in a year.

Who, then, is to be benefitted by this new system of policy? I have shown that neither the farmer, the manufacturer, the mechanic, or the laborer, will derive any advantage from it; but, on the contrary, each and all of them will be very materially and seriously injured by the adoption of it. Who, then, I ask again, is to be benefitted by it? Allow me to tell you, sir. The importing merchants, many of whom are foreigners, and have no sympathy with our citizens, except for the purpose of obtaining their money; no affection for your Government, except to court its favors, with the view of promoting their own selfish views. The men who, if I mistake not, have their hired emissaries at the seat of your Government; aye, within the walls of your Capitol; exhibiting their gaudy and flimsy fabrics; and, by misrepresentation and deception, endeavoring to mislead the judgment of those upon whom the decision of this great question devolves.

Sir, if, in the exuberance of our philanthropy, we extend our sympathy beyond the rolling billows of the broad Atlantic, and seek to ameliorate the condition of the liege subjects of her Britannic Majesty, Queen Victoria, at the expense of our own citizens, we shall find some excuse for the extraordinary character of this bill. Yet, even then, a slight examination will convince us that our charity is misapplied, and that those who most need it will be the last to receive the benefit of it. The poor operatives in England have, by a long series of oppression, been reduced to the lowest depth of misery which human nature can endure. They are entirely at the mercy of the rich capitalists, who allow them just such wages as will enable them to sustain their families in a mode of living—far inferior to any thing that people in this country are accustomed to—barely to keep them out of the parish workhouse, and prevent them from becoming a charge on the parish. And so dense is the population, so numerous that class of people there, that almost any number of workmen can be obtained, by giving them regular and constant employment, without any material increase of wages; and nine-tenths of the actual benefit which you are about to confer on the English, as a nation, by the passage of this bill, (and it is no trifling boon,) instead of enuring to the advantage of the poor, will be conferred on those whose wealth is already immense, and whose capital is employed to our injury; and thus you are oppressing the honest laborers in your own country, to augment the overgrown fortunes of the English aristocracy. Such an exercise of philanthropy will, I fancy, meet but little response in American bosoms, and redound but slightly to the honor and the fame of the projectors and abettors of this suicidal anti American policy.

Mr. Chairman, having thus glanced at the pernicious and injurious tendency of the bill now before us, I shall proceed, briefly, to point out some of the benefits and advantages of the protective system. Next to providing security for the persons and property of its citizens, and guaranteeing to each individual that liberty, both civil and religious, which was purchased by the valor, and the treasure, and the blood of our ancestors, and bequeathed to us

as an inalienable birthright, it is the duty of Government to foster and cherish, by every means in its power, those great leading interests that are calculated to render us entirely independent of other nations, and particularly such as are essential to the national defence.

The sentiment, that peace is the time in which to prepare for war, has been so frequently adverted to here, and the correctness of that sentiment is so universally admitted, that it requires no justification at my hands. But though all admit the truth and force of the sentiment, a great diversity of opinion may obtain in regard to the proper application of it. A nation, in order to prosecute a war with vigor and effect, will be under the necessity of bringing into requisition a great many things besides the active physical force that marches into the battle-field, or the fortifications that are erected to defend particular situations, and check the onward march of a hostile foe. Money is said to be the sinews of war, and without a copious supply of this necessary ingredient, no civilized nation can wage war long. Yet no one will recommend the hoarding of vast treasures in time of peace, to be kept in readiness for the emergency of war. It is contrary to the genius of our Government to collect money from its citizens, by either direct or indirect taxation, for the purpose of accumulating large sums of money that are to lie idle and useless in the Treasury until the exigency of war should call it into active circulation. The corrupting influence of such a treasure would be more dangerous to the morals, and prejudicial to the interests, of the country, than even war itself. Hence it is not the policy of this country to prepare for war by laying up large amounts of money in time of peace.

In the next place, troops are indispensably necessary in the prosecution of a war, yet no one will admit the propriety of maintaining a large standing army in time of peace. War between civilized nations is an event of such rare occurrence in our day, that it would be consummate folly to incur the expense of keeping up a large army, when there is no earthly prospect of their services being required. The intervals of peace are so extended, that your soldiers might become old, infirm, superannuated, and helpless, without being called upon to face the enemy in battle array.

To say nothing of the danger to the republic from the constant presence of a large armed force, the mass of whom would be accustomed to yield implicit obedience to their superiors, and in time rendered willing slaves to imperative commanders, and, finally, might become subservient instruments in the hands of designing men to subvert those liberties they were designed to protect. To say nothing of those considerations, which sagacious statesmen ought not to overlook, the expense alone of maintaining a large standing army would be an insuperable objection to this mode of providing for war in time of peace.

How, then, ought this maxim of providing for war in time of peace to be complied with?

Sir, by pursuing a course of policy in time of peace that will fully develop all the sources of the country, and at the same time promote the prosperity and well-being of its citizens. Encourage and protect your domestic manufactures, so that in case war should become inevitable, and our communication with other countries be interrupted or entirely cut off, your citizens can be furnished with every thing that they have been accustomed to enjoy, by the enterprize and industry of their own countrymen. It is



not only the soldier, who buckles on his armor and perils his life in the battle-field, that suffers during a time of war; the privations which he suffers, the dangers which he encounters, the hardships he undergoes, the fatigue he endures, and the sacrifices he makes, are infinitely greater than those of any other, I admit; but every man, aye, and every woman, too, however exalted their station, or humble their condition, will experience its desolating effects. Some in the derangement of their business, others in the deprivation of luxuries long accustomed to; some in the onerous burdens which it imposes, others in the enhancement of the prices of the necessaries of life. All, all, are affected by it, and, not unfrequently, each fancies himself the greatest sufferer. Under a government like ours, where public opinion exercises so potent an influence in the councils of the nation, it becomes peculiarly necessary to consult the interests and provide for the comforts of the whole people; and if they find those interests disregarded or neglected by those who have the administration of the Government in their hands, they will not fail, by the just exercise of those rights which are guaranteed to them by our Constitution and laws, to displace those now in power, and fill their places with those who will execute the trust with greater fidelity. Our country, more than that of any other in the world, has all the elements of true independence within itself; and if Government will only pursue a proper policy, so as to improve all our advantages, and keep us a contented and united people, we may bid defiance to the united efforts of all the powers of the world combined against us. By making your people prosperous and happy in time of peace, you place them in a proper condition to endure the burdens which a state of hostilities necessarily inflicts. By enabling the States to pay their indebtedness to foreign countries, you will re-establish your credit in those countries, and then you can command money whenever you want it; and this is the only way in which you ought to make provision in time of peace for money to carry on a war—that is, by placing your citizens in such circumstances as will enable them to contribute liberally and punctually in the shape of taxes, when necessary, and by establishing the credit of the National Government; so that you can obtain the aid of other nations by the negotiation of loans.

There is, sir, another mode of carrying out this maxim, of providing for war in time of peace, which I will advert to in a few words, though it has been referred to by other gentlemen; it is this, the resources of the Government ought, in time of peace, to be employed in the construction of improvements that would be beneficial to its citizens, during the continuance of that happy condition which it ought to be the pride and ambition of all rulers to secure for this country. This could be done by facilitating the means of intercourse, and strengthening and extending the commercial relations between different and remote sections of the country. Thus binding them together by the strong ligaments of mutual interest, social harmony, and sympathetic feeling, and securing them from the baleful influence of selfishness, envy, and jealousy of each other's power and prosperity. The improvements which I allude to, are McAdamized roads, railroads, canals, improvement of rivers and harbors, bridges over large streams, convenient mail routes, and such like things. Any improvement, the utility of which will be worth to the people in time of peace the interest upon the cost, and be subservient to the national defence in time of war. In expending the

resources of the Government in this way, you secure a two-fold advantage : *First.* Your money is invested in improvements that confer immense and almost incalculable advantages upon your citizens, and at the same time yields a revenue adequate to the annual repairs, and thus keeps itself always in proper condition. *Secondly.* In the facilities which those improvements afford to the Government in time of war, in the transportation of troops, ordnance, provisions, military stores, and camp equipage, from one point to another, you will save more in many instances than the original cost of the work, independent of the consideration, that by the aid of those facilities of inter-communication one thousand men will be able to defend your seaboard more effectually than three times the number could have done forty years ago.

Now, Mr. Chairman, how are all those desirable objects to be attained? Sir, by rejecting the bill on your table, and leaving the tariff of '42 stand as it is; and that is the only way in which this can be effected.

This is, fortunately for my argument, no new theory, no untried visionary scheme. The experience of the past exhibits a prosperity under our protective system unexampled in the history of the world. What has been the situation of the country, when the duties were so low as to afford inadequate protection to our domestic manufactures? What was the condition of the country five years ago, before the passage of the tariff of 1842, which is now sought to be repealed? Who does not recollect it? There is not a man within the sound of my voice, who has paid any attention to what was going on around him; that don't remember the gloom that pervaded the whole community at that time. Was not the country suffering and laboring under all the disadvantages and difficulties that I have been endeavoring to describe, and which were so eloquently portrayed by my friend from Kentucky, (Dr. YOUNG,) a few days ago? Your furnaces, forges, bloomeries, and factories, were then standing still; and the thousands of active and industrious operatives, that are now so happily and sedulously engaged in attending to those establishments, were then destitute of employment. Business was paralyzed; produce, not only low in price, but in many places almost unsaleable at any price. The value of real estate depreciated, and pecuniary embarrassment, distrust and wretchedness, pervading the whole community; and not only individuals, but States reduced to the verge of hopeless bankruptcy. Contrast the condition of the country then, with that which it exhibits now, and see whether you don't find the confirmation of what I have stated.

Soon after the passage of the tariff bill of 1842, business began to revive. The sound of the anvil and the shuttle again reverberates through what had been tenantless and desolate habitations. The hum of business, the clangor of industry, and the clanking of machinery was every where heard, like the carolling of the feathered songsters welcoming the genial return of spring after a severe and dreary winter; enlivening and animating the whole face of nature, and diffusing contentment and happiness throughout the whole extent of your wide spread territory. Buildings sprang up, as if by magic; the wilderness was literally made to blossom as the rose. Minerals that had lain dormant in the bowels of the earth since the time of the creation, were hoisted from the dark caverns in which nature had deposited them, taken to your laboratories, and converted into gold, or, what is better, into bread.



Not by the fancied process of the dreaming alchymist, but by the more certain and effectual development of art, of science, and of protected industry.

But our brethren of the South imagine that the blessings thus conferred on our prosperous country are purchased at their expense. Sir, I apprehend that they have not taken a correct and impartial view of this interesting subject. They are laboring under some strange delusion, some captivating erroneous theory, that prevents them from taking that calm, philosophic, and enlightened view of this subject, which they so uniformly exercise upon every other. Let them investigate it fully and fairly—let them bring to the aid of their judgment the recollections of the past, and examine the condition of the present, and they cannot avoid the conclusion, for it is sustained by incontrovertible facts, that every article which they purchase, and which has been protected for a number of years, comes to them cheaper now than it did before the protective system was adopted. But even if this were not the case, we might appeal to their patriotism, and ask whether they are not willing to endure some inconvenience, for the purpose of establishing the true independence of their country upon a sure and permanent basis.

Permit me now, sir, to say a few words in reply to some of the arguments of gentlemen on the opposite side of this question. They charge us with inconsistency, and efforts are made to invalidate our arguments, because we advocate a cause that gentlemen suppose would operate against our own interest; as if gentlemen acting in the high and honorable capacity of legislators, could not rise above the grovelling motives of sordid interest and selfish views. Do those gentlemen wish us to estimate their patriotism and their disinterestedness by the same measure which they mete unto us? We do not claim greater perfection than usually falls to the lot of frail humanity, and make no professions of sacrifices inconsistent with a reasonable regard to our own interests. Gentlemen, however, labor under a great misapprehension, when they set down as manufacturers, and the advocates of the exclusive manufacturing interest, all those who are in favor of the protective system; this mistake in the premises leads to still greater errors in the conclusions; and hence they are unable to see how it is that the manufacturers, as they call them, are such strenuous advocates of a policy which they allege is calculated to diminish their own profits. Sir, many of those who are the most unflinching advocates of the protective policy, are not particularly identified with the manufacturers, except so far as the prosperity of those establishments conduce to the general prosperity of the whole country. The district which has given me the honor of holding a seat upon this floor, is emphatically an agricultural district, and raises more agricultural productions than any other in the State wherein it is located; and is, perhaps, not inferior to any of the same extent in the United States. It is our interest, then, that the manufactured articles should be reduced to the lowest price for which they can be made in this country. We have no desire to see the manufacturers realizing a profit of thirty, or twenty-five, or even fifteen per cent., whilst we, as agriculturists, cannot by the cultivation of our lands realize more than four or five per cent. on the capital invested; and very often not that much. Nor do we believe that the manufacturing business is so profitable as those who advocate this bill assert it to be. If we could be persuaded that those calculations of the anti-protectionists are

correct, we should not hesitate to sell our lands, and embark in those highly profitable pursuits.

The calculations which produce the results on which gentlemen place so much reliance here, are founded upon erroneous data. Many of the manufacturing establishments, that are now doing a fair, perhaps a profitable business, have been purchased during some of those revulsions which your unstable, fluctuating policy has so frequently produced, at great sacrifices; in many instances for less than one-fourth of the original value. I know, sir, an instance in the county in which I reside, where a factory was erected by a company, which, together with the machinery and the buildings necessary for the workmen, cost some fifty or sixty thousand dollars, perhaps more. In a few years the company failed, and the whole investment was almost a total loss. It was purchased, at a very reduced price, by an individual, who, after carrying it on for a number of years, also failed, leaving his creditors to pay for his experience in this enviably profitable business of manufacturing. Within the last three years this same property was sold for some \$7,000, if my recollection serves me right; and the last purchaser has since been offered \$3,000 profit, making more than forty per cent. on his investment, and refused to take it. Is it fair, then, to argue, that, because this man refused an advantageous offer, under peculiar circumstances, that may not occur again in an age to come; is it fair, I ask again, to infer from that, that the business is highly profitable, when those who preceded him have failed entirely, and when from sixty to eighty thousand dollars have been sunk and sacrificed in this very establishment? This is the way, sir, in which these enormous profits are calculated, when the people in the vicinity of those establishments, who have had an opportunity of forming accurate judgments on those interesting cases, know them to be false and delusive in the extreme.

Sir, those strong cases make bad precedents; and, if any one would take the trouble to search for them, cases equally strong, and perhaps equally delusive, might be found in agricultural pursuits. I have been told of a farmer who went to the western prairies and took up a hundred acres of land, at the Government price, a dollar and a quarter per acre. He went to work, had the whole broken up with the plough, and seeded with wheat; and the crop thus produced, not only paid for all the labor and expense, but enabled him to pay for his land, and had a considerable sum left; while at the same time his land was worth three times as much as when he commenced. Here, then, was a profit of 300 per cent. in the depressed and over-taxed pursuit of agriculture; and yet we are asked by gentlemen from the West to relieve them from the onerous burdens inflicted on them by this black tariff. I have only adverted to this to show that isolated cases, under peculiar circumstances, form very fallacious precedents upon which to found general principles. The calculations which gentlemen rely upon to sustain their arguments are frequently made by persons not fully acquainted with all the facts connected with the case, and in this way results are obtained that have no foundation in facts.

The honorable gentlemen from North Carolina, (Mr. Briggs,) who addressed the committee on yesterday, told us that "moderate and permanent protection is all that manufacturers ought to ask; and that is what a revenue tariff gives." I agree, sir, that moderate and permanent protection is all



that manufacturers ought to ask; but he and I differ in opinion in regard to what kind of a tariff will best effect the object which we both have in view. I believe that the present tariff affords such protection as gives proper encouragement to manufacturers, without affording them more than a reasonable profit. Calculations of profit, made by men not themselves engaged in the business, and who have no practical knowledge of the difficulties which had to be encountered, are at once adopted as being undeniably true, and relied on as arguments in favor of reducing the tariff. (This, sir, is a great mistake; the immense profits supposed to be realized by the manufacturers are only to be found in the erroneous calculations made by misguided theorists. The manufacturers, on an average, realize no greater profit than is generally enjoyed by others of our citizens who are engaged in other branches of business. The tariff, as it is, affords a reasonable protection, and ensures to the manufacturer a moderate remuneration, and no more. Do gentlemen expect to establish permanent protection by a revenue tariff? The amount of revenue is regulated by the wants of the *Treasury*, and is subject to diminution or increase, according as the action of the Government is profuse or economical; and, consequently, there is no stability about it. We now find ourselves in a state of war, and the expenses of Government during the ensuing year must necessarily be increased; and, therefore, the tariff must be changed to meet those additional expenses. Next year, if peace should be restored, as I hope it may be, we must have another change to accommodate the tariff to the wants of the Treasury. It is expected by many that the war will soon be brought to a close; the Executive, I understand, has expressed a belief that peace would be concluded before the expiration of sixty days; I shall be pleased to see it; but if peace were declared to-morrow, we shall have incurred a great expense in the prosecution of the war, and will find it necessary to provide for those expenses. No, sir, an ever-changing, uncertain, shifting revenue tariff, will be more pernicious to the manufacturing interest than any other. Men who were about to abandon their usual pursuits and enter into new, and, to them, untried branches of business, if possessed of an ordinary degree of prudence, would like to make some calculations as regards their prospects of success. But with your unsettled, vacillating policy, what data had they to depend on? None whatever. A policy that so vitally affects the interests of the whole community should not be changed hastily or inconsiderately. The people have a right to expect, and will demand at your hands, that a policy that has worked so well, and been productive of so much good, shall be left undisturbed. "Let well enough alone," is the old maxim, and will hold good for Government as well as for individuals.

Gentlemen possess a very strong sympathy for the operatives in our factories, whom they seem to consider as objects of their profound compassion, the innocent victims of avarice and oppression. But let them go to the spot where those fancied oppressions are exercised; let them visit and examine those men at their homes, and look into their condition, and witness the neatness and comfort of their dwellings, and the order that prevails around them, and they will discover that a more intelligent, more cheerful, better fed, better clothed, and more contented class of men is not to be found in this country.

Mr. Chairman, the State represented by myself and colleagues on this floor, is, perhaps, more deeply interested in this question than any other, for though our manufactures are fewer in proportion to the whole population than some others, yet those manufactures are very important, and more dependant on protection than most others. Several of her representatives have already spoken, others are desirous of addressing the committee, and, I hope, may have the opportunity of doing so. Having briefly stated my views, I shall no longer occupy the attention of the committee.











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